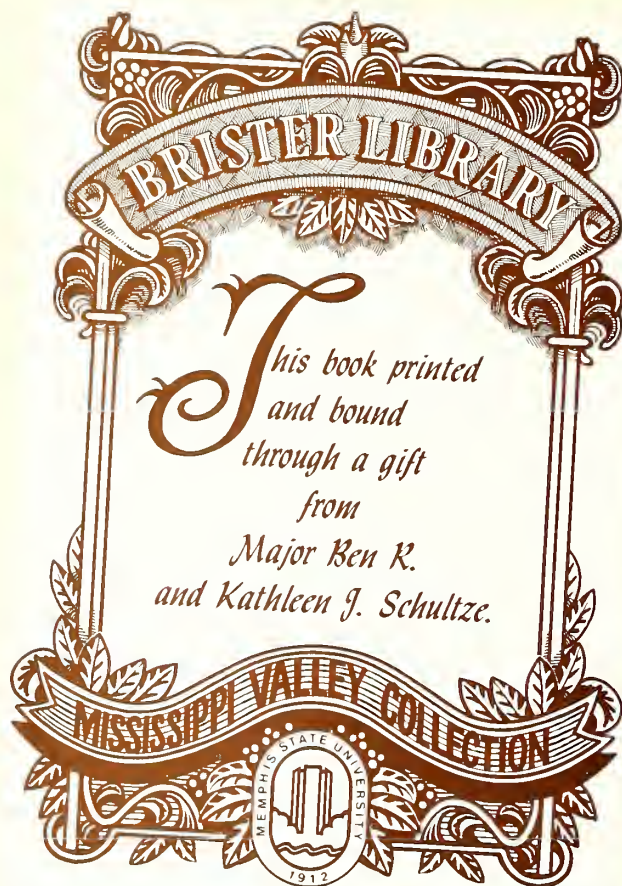


AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE WINFIELD DUNN ADMINISTRATION
INTERVIEW WITH
WILLIAM H. BUCK JR.

BY - CHESTER MORGAN
TRANSCRIBER - BETTY WILLIAMS
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE
MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY



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INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM H. BUCK JR.

MAY 1, 1976

BY CHESTER MORGAN

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1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a general

discussion of the problem.

2. The second part

contains the main results of the paper.

3. The third part

contains the conclusions of the paper.

4. The fourth part

contains the references.

5. The fifth part

contains the appendix.

6. The sixth part

contains the bibliography.

7. The seventh part

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Buck

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PLACE Memphis, TN

DATE May 1, 1976

William H. Buck Jr.
(Interviewee)

Chester M. Morgan III
(For the Mississippi Valley Archives
of the John Willard Brister Library
of Memphis State University)

THIS IS THE ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE OF MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY. THE PROJECT IS THE "WINFIELD DUNN CAMPAIGN AND ADMINISTRATION." THE DATE IS MAY 1, 1976 AND THE PLACE IS MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE. THE INTERVIEW IS WITH MR. WILLIAM H. BUCK, JR. THE INTERVIEW IS BY CHESTER MORGAN. TRANSCRIBED BY BETTY WILLIAMS.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Buck, if you would I would like for you to start with as brief a biographical sketch of yourself as you can give. Perhaps something about your family background, when and where you were born, your education and career possibly up until the time that you were acquainted with Mr. Dunn.

MR. BUCK: I am a Memphian. I went in my early schooling to Messick. I went off to a military school for four years. I came back and went to Memphis State and spent 3 years there. I went into the Navy for 3 1/2 years and came back and graduated. I actually had no interest in politics up to that time since my parents had not shown too much interest at all. My first knowledge was through involvement in 1952 when Eisenhower ran. I got involved that year and I guess I got the bug so I guess for the last 23 years I have been pretty deep in my politics that I take quite seriously.

Of course, the Republican Party had been my choice because I felt it was more representative of how I feel. I met a lot of good friends in the party. One of them, of course, Winfield Dunn. He was early in the party a shining light in that he had such dedication.



He was a fine Christian. He had a good family. He had a good image to everybody. He worked diligently at every task as far as I can recall that he was asked to work. He was, of course, in the old Ninth Congressional District as was I. We got acquainted of course that way.

MR. MORGAN: Do you remember the circumstances under which you first met Winfield Dunn?

MR. BUCK: I really do not. Probably at some of our Ninth District meetings because we were in different precincts. So we did not have that contact at the precinct level. We probably got together at the district meetings and then eventually I believe Winfield was elected to the Shelby County Steering Committee as I was on several occasions. We got there to work together of course.

MR. MORGAN: Can you narrow that down chronologically? Do you remember when you began to know and when you remember you got acquainted?

MR. BUCK: I think Winfield got involved--it's a guess--he got involved about 20 years ago probably after he got out of dental school in the late fifties. This was when he would make his move into politics. I think in about 1958, I imagine that it would be about the first time. I can't recall the exact year, but I think about 1958, I imagine that he was active. Then like I say we were together on the Steering Committee once or twice. He was the Chairman of the party of Shelby County, I



think once or twice. He did an exceptional job I feel of leadership that way when he was first brought to the attention of the party.

MR. MORGAN: Can you recall any first impressions you had when you first got to know him?

MR. BUCK: Well, without being too flip, he was kind of like Mr. Clean. He was always the perfect gentleman and he was well dressed all the time, very friendly and very sincere--just a good image, period.

MR. MORGAN: Talk if you will a little about Republican politics in Memphis in your early years and early association with Republican Party and particularly later on with your association with Winfield Dunn and the Republican politics in Memphis.

MR. BUCK: Well, you would like to think that you contributed something to whatever you are participating in and I don't know where my participation actually made the most impression. But like Winfield, we all worked on the precinct level, out knocking on doors. I remember one time, I forget what year, maybe it was '64, possibly when Gore ran, we would meet down at headquarters at Crosstown. Winfield and some of us would go out and knock on doors in all parts of town at night trying to get people to be aware. These brought us closer together, I think, getting to go out and work as teams. He was always willing, although he was like all of us. He had been working all day at his work and he would come at night and make his rounds with us on these door to



door canvases if we could get people to participate and get involved.

This was a real thrill I do believe. It was an education for all of us to work in this area because we found that at least half the people we contacted I think were not registered or even interested in politics. So it was fun to do something like this. It became infectious. We got excited about it. I think that is what helped build the Republican Party because we had something new. Even though we have had our ups and downs, I think we have had a good impression on this state by having a two-party system. Without competition in business or anything, things get bad. I think we've had a problem in the past and not just in Tennessee, but in other states where you only have one party in power.

So it was exciting to be a part in building the Republican Party in the last 25 years. He was certainly a vital part, I'll say that!

MR. MORGAN: In a little more detail, just trace the--of course this is reaching back and picking up things that are a long time ago maybe--trace the development of your relationship to Winfield Dunn inside that political structure of the Republican Party in Memphis and Shelby County. Chronologically, what do you recall of significant events and how his career developed or how his interest evolved as you recall it?

MR. BUCK: Well, actually I wasn't close to Winfield, particularly through any church affiliation or a close friend. I was strictly a political



tie. Of course, we did become close friends as all who were associated with him and with Betty, his wife. But I guess like I say, in the late fifties when I first was aware he was with us or we were together in trying to do something in politics, he did such a good job, I think, of communicating with people that he was elected Chairman of the party here in Shelby County.

MR. MORGAN: Do you remember when that was?

MR. BUCK: I think it was around maybe '66, '68.

He had two terms. About the records, I can't tell you, but about that time. He had several people who I felt a very admiration for that were big boosters of his--Harry Wellford, who is now a federal judge and is a good friend of ours, a neighbor--he was a great assistance to Winfield, I think to say the least in encouraging him. After Winfield was Chairman, he had done such a good job it was obvious that he would be considered for some other office. It was improbable to actually think at the time that he would not continue practicing his dental work, but the way circumstances occurred, he was the logical one. So people made overtures to him apparently.

I think in the spring of 1970--the year he ran and was elected--he came by the house one afternoon, one of his children was a good friend of my oldest daughter--they were not close friends, but they were acquainted and all and they ran together in school sometimes. He came by and wanted to ask me a question--and out of the clear blue he asked this. "What did I think about his running for office?"



I think that was how it was put. What office? I didn't even have any idea about his interest! When he said he had talked to some people. People had encouraged him to consider the race. Of course, I was willing to encourage him all that I could.

So from '70 on, that year, rather, we were working a good bit. He and Brock, of course, ran as a team that year and it was an excellent thing for the state at the time. Of course the Republican Party did win a resounding victory that year. But Winfield showed the leadership I feel that we needed at the time.

Oftentimes you try to find fault with somebody who is the opponent and they made a concerted effort--they, people who didn't like him--they might have been Democrats, say. He was not a businessman, he was a dentist. Of course, that is not correct and it is not fair. He showed excellent business acumen when he was in office, I feel. He had the ability to communicate with all groups of people. I think that is one of his good strong points. He didn't have any problems talking with anyone.

In the summer of his election, we used bus trips through West Tennessee, a bunch of the Dunn Dollies and of course, my oldest daughter was a Dunn Dollie. All the children were around 13, 14 or 15 or 16 as of course, one of his children was involved. It was exciting to see all the young people that had an interest in politics that year maybe because of this push toward the youthful groups. He did a good job I think of communicating with folks that hadn't been communicated with. He was a new face--a fresh face--completely



sincere, not a political hack as such. His political background was very limited, but his knowledge of politics and people was real good. I think that was his strong point.

MR. MORGAN: You mentioned Harry Wellford and you said that there were some others that early began to recognize Winfield Dunn's potential for leadership. Who were some of the others?

MR. BUCK: Well, I can't mention a lot of names. I know Harry and his wife, Katherine Wellford were close to us. We know them quite well through politics primarily in the last 20 years. I can't tell you a lot of folks who spoke to Winfield certainly at all. I just knew that Harry Wellford would be one of them I am sure. I can't tell you who else talked with him at all.

I know when Winfield came by the house that day, I think he said he had talked to some poeple up in West Tennessee--Dyersburg, Union City or some place. I don't know where he had been. They had talked with him about it. I honestly don't know who it might have been.

MR. MORGAN: Looking back on those years before 1970, at his work in the Republican Party, could you give instances of his activity or things he did that would be examples of leadership potential to people that they saw.

MR. BUCK: You always have a disagreement over different points. At times we have had



differences of opinion within the Republican Party even here in Shelby County. He was a person who could work with both sides, so to speak. He tried to be a middle of the roader. He did not try to take sides. It was best to do this.

To digress a second, after his election we had a meeting at the Governor's mansion of the county chairmen over the state and I happened to go up there for Shelby County. He made the statement that he was being fussed at by some of the Republicans that he wasn't giving preferential treatment to some of the Republicans. He didn't throw out the rascals and put some people in. He was very quick to point out tactfully that Republicans didn't elect him only--that the people of Tennessee, and a lot of them were not Republicans. So I felt like that he was instrumental in communicating with these folks that he was everybody's governor.

Well, when he was district chairman here he had worked with both sides. It was difficult because at times he had personality clashes, little petty jealousies. Winfield was always the moderator. He could work with both groups if there were two groups or three groups. He seemed to have this ability to cool people off if they got a little bit heated. He could talk with the antagonists and get them together. I think that was one of the things that was shown early when he was chairman of the party here, I think in the mid-sixties when he first came in. So he showed this to us and I think that was part of the reason a lot of folks could get behind him.



MR. MORGAN: I believe you mentioned the spring of 1970 was the first time that you had any idea that he had intentions of running for office. Up to that point even though you may not have known of a specific desire to run, can you recall anything that would have been in your mind that might have been a draw-back to his candidacy? You talked about the positive factors, can you think of anything that you saw as things that would have held him back--negative factors--in terms of public office?

MR. BUCK: Well, you always think of a person who is well-known, and name recognition was a problem. Winfield had a real good name. The name recognition was great here in Shelby County. Some of the people in West Tennessee were well acquainted with him and his ability to work within the party structure here. That was one of the things--the name recognition factor. He hadn't been in public life. He was limited in that he had his dental work primarily. He did not travel that I know of and do any work outside this area. He worked strictly in his office here on Poplar. That would be the only thing I believe, because when you have someone run for office, name recognition is prime consideration. He just did not have that in East Tennessee especially.

MR. MORGAN: In the spring of 1970, is that when you understood he was interested in the governorship?

MR. BUCK: Yes.



MR. MORGAN: Can you recall how you assessed his chances, first in the primary and then if a victory in the primary, how you would do in the general?

MR. BUCK: Well, you want to always say, "I knew he was going to win, but I didn't." I didn't think he had too much chance early because of the thing I mentioned--name recognition was a real problem. He wasn't known, I would say, east of the Tennessee River that much politically. He had had some state contact, of course. He had some friends in Nashville, I am sure, because he had done a lot of work. But you have to have East Tennessee support just like an East Tennessee [candidate] would have to have West Tennessee support. When Howard Baker ran in '66, he couldn't have cut it without what we did here in Shelby County. Of course, Winfield and a lot of them were very, very instrumental in doing a good job for Howard Baker. Of course, he did have some recognition through Senator Baker's group in East Tennessee, but he didn't have that name recognition going for him when he first started to run, so he had to have a hard selling job.

MR. MORGAN: Let's move on into that 1970 Republican primary campaign. What exactly was your capacity and relationship to Winfield Dunn in that campaign?

MR. BUCK: Well, I don't know that I had any official title in Winfield's campaign. Primarily, I raised money for the party. I raised some money for Winfield as I was working for Bill Brock as well. I don't remember



if I had any official capacity at all in Winfield's campaign. I know I was by headquarters daily as I usually am in a campaign. I'd go by daily and report names or pick up something to do, but I don't think I had any title as such.

MR. MORGAN: Let's talk about that fund raising and financing. How do you go about--or how did you go about--getting money for political campaigns for a candidate or the party?

MR. BUCK: Well, it's an easy thing for me in that I am in a selling capacity in the insurance business. Of course, you have to present something and have people put money up to pay for it. So the ability to ask for money is routine and I've been in the business a long time and I have volunteered years past to raise money, and for some reason it is an easy thing to do. I've had very little reluctance to work in this part of a person's campaign. Most of the time I have been on finance committees. I possibly was on his finance committee, at the time. I don't know. I haven't even looked at the record to see what I did officially. But that would be one of the main areas that I would work in. I did something that I felt strongly about and I knew a lot of people having been here all my life. It came rather natural.

MR. MORGAN: If you could, specifically how do you go about this kind of thing? Where did the money come from in the general fund? What kind of problems did you have? How big a problem was financing?



MR. BUCK:

Well, the main problem you have in
political financing of anything is:

Who is it?--and--What is it for? How much chance do you have?

Oftentimes people are reluctant to give to an unknown. A lot of these people who are not politically oriented--Winfield was an unknown. His chances were very small. We'd always just had a Democratic governor and little effort was put forth to run a Republican, but not a strong campaign had been put forth like this. So some of the early reluctance was: "Who is he?" for the people who were not active in the Republican Party of course. I don't solicit just from Republicans; I go out to the public. There was a gradual name recognition all of a sudden. The person to whom Winfield was running against may not have been the most popular person to some of these folks. They liked some of the other Republicans. That helped a little bit. A lot of them were very much involved and behind Brock's campaign and so a lot of them gave to both campaigns and that made it easy. A lot of them have been wooed to consider the Republican thing because of Howard Baker's success in '66 and his acceptance. So when we went, a lot of people were very much willing to hear who Winfield Dunn was.

After the primary there was no problem I am sure, because those people knew he was a serious candidate.

MR. MORGAN:

What was the scope of your fund raising?

Was it limited primarily to Memphis and
Shelby County?



MR. BUCK: Oh yes, I didn't work outside of Shelby County at all. I did not travel for finance purposes.

MR. MORGAN: Who was in charge of financing?

MR. BUCK: For Winfield?

MR. MORGAN: First of all the statewide campaign and then locally.

MR. BUCK: I am embarrassed. I have no idea who the finance chairman was of Winfield's statewide campaign. Maybe it was S.L. Kopald, possibly. I don't know what his position was at the time. But Kopie had a very big place in Winfield's campaign. I don't know if he was the Finance Chairman or not. I don't recall.

MR. MORGAN: Were you Finance Chairman for the County?

MR. BUCK: No, I was just another worker.

MR. MORGAN: Who was in charge of finances?

MR. BUCK: I honestly can't recall. I just forgot things like this. I don't keep anything in my head. I'm sorry. I don't know who was in 1970. I have no idea.

MR. MORGAN: Let's talk about their organization a little more. How familiar were you with the campaign organization locally?

MR. BUCK: I think I knew everybody quite well who



was in the campaign. I honestly can't remember a lot of names. I know the lady who ran his office, I think, who has done so much for the party too is Bettie Davis. Of course, after Winfield was elected, Bettie was in charge of his Memphis office here. She was in his office here full-time after the campaign. I can't tell you who was on the committee as such. I just don't recall.

MR. MORGAN: How much contact did you have with the organization when it comes to your raising money? You would raise the money and who would give it to you?

MR. BUCK: I would just give it to whoever it was that was in the Finance Committee at the time. I would just turn it in. They would have a meeting and we would just turn the money in. I don't remember who it was in charge of finances at all.

MR. MORGAN: Can you remember how much money there was to work with in the primary campaign?

MR. BUCK: I have no idea. I believe I recall there was a shortage of money to start with because of his being an unknown to a lot of people. It is difficult to get any money of any consequence, even back then in '70 when you could get money a little more freely. It is difficult to get it for an unknown. The people who didn't know him were willing to give him \$10 or \$25, but they weren't going to give him any \$100 or \$500 at all. It was slow at first. It built up momentum as they



saw he had a good chance and when it did get to the primary, why it was a different story. A lot of the solicitation was, say Republicans. Say, you go out for Brock and Dunn both. A lot of people just worked for Brock alone or Dunn alone. There were conflicts and we had personalities that you get involved between themselves that had nothing to do with the candidate. But I was just working to pick up money. You'd go out and a guy would say, "I am strong for Brock." I'd say that is why I am here. Or, "I am all strong for Dunn." That is why I am here. So whatever they wanted to give me, if they wanted to give me two checks, I would take two checks, because indirectly it is going to the same cause.

MR. MORGAN: Were most of the contributions small amounts, little by little, or were there any major[ones]?

MR. BUCK: Most of them were small I think. A \$100 or several \$100 was the most. I had a few that were a little larger, but most of them were small contributions.

MR. MORGAN: Did the larger contributions tend to come later?

MR. BUCK: Right, sure did. People want to not just back a winner, but a lot of them are reluctant to back a loser. Let's say it that way. They don't want to come in real strong. We had some meetings for Senator Brock one time and some people who wanted to give money, and when it was



evident that he had a good chance of winning why we could get people to come meet with us and give us some pretty good money. The same thing applied to Winfield's campaign. After that primary everything started picking up. All of a sudden they realized this man can win and a few of them wanted to get on the bandwagon kind of. They came in and gave us some money. In fact, some of them after the election said I have been trying to get in touch with you, I want to give you a check. We didn't bother to pick up those checks.

MR. MORGAN: Outside of fund raising, what other involvement did you have in the Dunn campaign, particularly in the primary?

MR. BUCK: Well, just like I say in the early stages we were going out on bus trips. I would be on the bus with a lot of the young folks and we would make stops in 3 or 4 different towns and stay and have a little rally of some kind.

MR. MORGAN: Describe that a little more in detail.

MR. BUCK: Well, he had some of these young folks that were Dunn Dollies, boys and girls, but the Dunn Dollies were the young ladies of course, and you had some young adults. These would go along with us and a few of the older people. We would go to a small town and the campaign committee of that little town would have a thing set up with a P.A. system and they'd have a little hoopla and some music and we'd get out and they would have a big rah-rah and Betty Dunn was with us some time and

Winfield was with us some time. Just to stimulate interest and hand out the bumper stickers, and buttons. We'd do this week after week and it was an exciting thing.

I'll never forget when we were outside Jackson and we had made 3 or 4 stops that day and we got into Jackson and it was raining real hard. We went into an old building where they had the campaign headquarters and saw Betty Dunn and she was so pleased. She couldn't imagine all these people being out on such a rainy day! But it was exciting and it really was!

You get caught up in this thing and it gets to become a religion with you. After 20 years or so it was all I thought of doing-- something like this. There was such an appreciation shown by Betty and Winfield that you just wanted to do anything in the world for them. They stimulated people and encouraged people to do something--not just work for them but do what was right and they happened to be the vehicle that they could work with. He did a great job of getting a lot of folks involved who hadn't been involved, of course. Betty was a great asset to him as she always is.

MR. MORGAN: How would you describe Winfield Dunn as a campaigner?

MR. BUCK: Oh, a super man! He was untiring and a real hand shaker, a sincere person. A lot of the politicians who we all know can shake your hand and look at somebody else. I don't know that I ever had that impression of Winfield ever. He shook your hand and said "Hello, how are you,

Bill". He would see people away from their environment and see them out of town and seemed to have a knack of remembering names. It's flattering. "Hi, how are you", and call you by your first name. He couldn't do it for everybody, but he excited a lot of folks with his ability to show this sincerity.

MR. MORGAN: What about as a speaker? Describe his style and give some details.

MR. BUCK: He wasn't a spellbinder like some of these people. He has an excellent voice, I think. Of course, I hung on every word he said. I felt like he was exuding complete sincerity. He didn't come across like the person who was just "running for office" and political oratory just to get me elected and that kind of talk. It wasn't that kind of talk at all. He seemed to be able to put the words together.

I think he did most of his own speech writing. His stuff was pretty much his sincere feelings. That was a great part of his appeal I do feel. Well, he was real active in Sunday School; he was a Sunday School teacher. I think he just had that ability to communicate with folks in a very honest and straight-forward way. This came across in his campaign.

MR. MORGAN: I am speaking now specifically of the primary, there were three other major candidates for governorship. What was the relationship between most of the local Republicans who were running for office themselves and the Dunn candidacy?

MR. BUCK: I don't remember all who were running for office when Winfield was running in '70. There were, I just can't remember the names, there's always a few who run their own campaign and didn't have anything to do with Winfield's campaign, but I don't know who all was running. I can't recall.

MR. MORGAN: By and large, did candidates identify themselves with Winfield?

MR. BUCK: All but one or two probably did, yes. I just don't know who all that was running that year, but we ran pretty much as a group with very little reservation. We had a couple of people I think for their own reasons decided to tie up with someone else other than Winfield, but I feel they regretted it later.

MR. MORGAN: Do you think you can put your finger on any reasons why that would happen?

MR. BUCK: It's a personal thing between them and someone else. If they didn't support Winfield, they ran their own campaigns. That was the idea perhaps-- a couple of people. It may have come back home to them. Let's say it that way.

MR. MORGAN: This is a very general question, but can you explain the very very strong showing that Winfield Dunn had in the Republican primary in his home country?

MR. BUCK: Well, name recognition was here. He was

that time. That makes a big difference. There's some politicians at the present time as you may well know whose ability to speak in public is atrocious, especially when they are in high office. Winfield did not have that problem. I keep using the term sincerity. It came across.

MR. MORGAN: What about the advertising of the primary? Do you recall and can you analyze how effective it was?

MR. BUCK: No, again I may have sat in on some of those meetings, but I wasn't directly involved in how that end of it was handled. There was a very limited budget as I recall for Winfield early--very limited. Some people got in early and gave money, but there was not a lot of folks. It was a limited amount that had to be utilized. Of course, the way it was spread out I don't know. Television, which is a big chunk of your advertising in politics, that has to be paid I think in cash on the front end: Of course, when you commit to that, you don't have a lot left. So it was slim pickings I believe early. Money was not that free flowing in the primary.

MR. MORGAN: How much knowledge of the campaign did you have outside of Shelby County?

MR. BUCK: Very little. The only time I went outside Shelby was with the bus trips that I'd go with some of the young folks to some of these little rallies in West Tennessee.

MR. MORGAN: How frequent were those?

MR. BUCK: Weekly, primarily on Saturday morning,
I think, they were.

MR. MORGAN: Did you make most of those?

MR. BUCK: No, I didn't make but just a few of them.

I think just two or three trips. You had to spread it around because you couldn't do all of them. Whatever job would come up, if it was Harry Wellford or any of us we would all just pitch in and do it. We had to get signs out. You had a committee to get the signs put out. We would all do it if we had to. So you had to let the people travel who could be spared once in awhile.

MR. MORGAN: You mentioned that you had reservations about how much chance Winfield Dunn had when he initially suggested his candidacy to you. Can you recall a point when you began to think that maybe he would at least win that nomination?

MR. BUCK: Well, you have to look at it as a team because of Winfield and Bill Brock's showings in the primary. Their team--I keep looking at it as a team--had a super chance. Their races complimented each other. I can't give you any specific period at all in there when I felt that Winfield was going to win. I just did not know. The big problem, in my estimation, was getting the name recognition thing to East Tennessee. Harry Wellford did a super job.

East Tennessee is an unusual group of Republicans--the people who would hear this would be dissatisfied--they did not always produce for Republican candidates if they didn't like them. As evidenced this last time in our governor's race. They did not produce for Lamar Alexander. That's putting it on tape. They didn't do a good job. He was a boy from West Tennessee and East Tennessee is another part of the world to them. Of course, we look the same way to their people. That was a hard selling job--convincing the people there that this unknown non-politician could be elected as governor.

MR. MORGAN:

Along that line, in general how do you think that the fact that Winfield Dunn was a professional man rather than a lawyer affected his candidacy?

MR. BUCK:

His candidacy was affected of course a good bit because a lot of people made light that he was just a dentist--just a doctor--what does he know about business? A lot of of very excellent businessmen are professionals like this. They don't have to be a full-time lawyer and a full-time politician. On the contrary, we need a little more freshness of some personalities, I think, in public life. We don't have to have only this particular segment of our community running for office.

I think after you met Winfield Dunn you were convinced that he did have a grasp of things. He didn't give you a lot of platitudes. He said I am not that knowledgeable about all facets of law or all this, but I am willing to discuss and willing to work at it. Apparent-

ly he had excellent ability to read and understand things. When he read something, he grasped [it and] he could make decisions. And it was quite evident to most people who were not trying to be hyper-critical after he got into office that he did have an excellent grasp of things when he was in office.

His main problems there when he was in office were his unwillingness to give in to certain segments of the state who wanted special treatment. Like East Tennessee, on some [issues] he made them real mad and a lot of them didn't forget it. They would not support Lamar for that reason.

MR. MORGAN: Can you pin down specifically the issues that you are talking about?

MR. BUCK: I think some of them were about Brushy Mt. Prison up there--the site of the prison. They were real strong about putting a university in East Tennessee and there was not sufficient funds to handle the present physical plants that they had already. The sizeable operation here in Memphis--it's not just a Memphis operation, but it's for the whole area of course. It was under-financed. It had limited budgets to work with. There's not money really in the state to go build something like this.

MR. MORGAN: How much of an impact did that have upon Lamar Alexander?

MR. BUCK: I think a good bit. A lot of these people sat on their hands and did not

work or support the Governor. They worked for the congressional candidate and refused to campaign for Lamar Alexander. In fact, on the First and Second Districts I remember looking at some statistics when they first came out after our defeat--it was so tragic--it was a spread like 15,000 to 20,000 more votes for the congressional candidate than there was for the governor which means you had that many less people who were interested in the Governor's race. Instead of coming out of East Tennessee with maybe a 100,000 bulge over the Democrat that was running, we came out almost losers as I recall. It meant that we had 30,000 to 50,000 thousand people who did not support their own candidate, period.

MR. MORGAN: Do you know of any or did you run into any specific incidents of someone attributed that kind of reluctance to those issues?

MR. BUCK: I've had very brief conversations. I've just been very disappointed. I don't even want to pursue it, but I am willing to tell them if they want to bring it up. They know, I've heard it mentioned in a meeting before--not just with East Tennesseans but with other people who know that East Tennessee did not produce. They are always so proud of what a strong Republican vote they have and then they have had that.

But it is not just Republican now--it is the conservative element in the state that votes Republican most of the time. That solid Republican vote did not come from East Tennessee. We carried Shelby County, I think, just barely for Lamar. All the work that

Winfield Dunn did--he worked hard, he campaigned, he flew, he drove, he spent a lot of hours trying to help to get Lamar elected. He was a very dedicated person to the cause. Of course the person running against Lamar Alexander--there was no way in the world we could lose--but we did. A lot of it was attributable as the anti-Republican year. People want to make excuses for him, but if you don't produce your own routine numbers like East Tennessee usually does, it is disappointing.

MR. MORGAN: Going back to 1970 Republican primary, in light of the fact that there were other major candidates for governor, what was the relationship between the senatorial candidate and particularly the Brock candidacy and Winfield Dunn in that primary? Was there much identification there?

MR. BUCK: Do you mean separation in the campaign? Is that what you are saying in identification?

MR. MORGAN: Was there any cooperation in terms of openly helping each other or was it pretty much hands off because of the other Republican candidates?

MR. BUCK: Yes, it was pretty much hands off. In the primary you don't go across into too many camps when you have four or five guys running for the other office. You want all those guys to support you so you can't take sides. For that reason Bill Brock could not take a position. I'm not speak-

ing for Senator Brock, but he could not take a position and work in a primary and encourage his people to work for Winfield. They had one problem: get him elected. We who also worked for Bill Brock, that's all we did. I said I would go in to someone to collect money and if they said they were all strong for Brock, that was fine. That's where I took the money if they said so. If they were all strong for Dunn, fine. If I could get two checks, I would get two checks. But you had those separate campaigns as they could not work together at all in the primary.

MR. MORGAN: One last question on the primary campaign. How much contact did you have with the candidate during that time? Did you see much of Winfield Dunn?

MR. BUCK: Yeah, I saw Winfield several times a week.

MR. MORGAN: Can you recall any conversations or his thoughts as things progressed?

MR. BUCK: Well, of course, it sounds like you are talking about yourself and want to brag a lot or something, but he exuded such confidence and I keep using the term sincerity. It was just there. It was infectious with the whole group around him. They were excited. There was no such thing as defeatism although, like I say, I had reservations about his chances when he ran. You always do when you don't have a strong politician running for an office.

As you went along, you gain momentum and you got excited about the man that you had so much admiration for him. You just knew something was going to happen. After that primary, well it was excitement plus. Of course, everytime we would see him he would have that good sincere handshake and man he would just give you that feeling that you knew he could win.

MR. MORGAN: How did you spend election day--the primary election day?

MR. BUCK: Let me see. I had worked in different precincts. I'd go around and check on six or eight different precincts. I would just check them to see how they were going, check their vote and see if they needed anything and then report back to headquarters. I would do that most of the day. I think I closed up some of the polling places. At times it was difficult. In some areas of Memphis we had a hard time getting a fair count perhaps. You had difficulties. You had certain federal laws that were abused. Intimidation--people didn't always abide by it. We tried to have poll watchers there. Part of that was my work sometimes to be a poll watcher. I don't know exactly in 1970 what I was doing on election day. But it was a combination of those things.

MR. MORGAN: Do you recall any such incidents in that campaign?

MR. BUCK: No, I can't recall any. We've had one or two things happen at different times. I don't remember anything specifically in '70 because I don't know.

I can't recall anything at all.

MR. MORGAN: What about that night of the elections
 as the returns came in? Do you remember
where you were? And can you describe that experience?

MR. BUCK: I believe. . . I don't usually go to
 the headquarters the final night. I
usually go home. If I did, I usually close the polls say and it
might have been 8:30 or 9:30 before I left the polls. The polls
closed at 8:00 o'clock I think. Oftentimes I would just go home and
we'd sit and watch the returns with two or three couples. But I
don't know if I was there at headquarters, I don't recall. I don't
usually go to the headquarters for the election. I've worked in
several other campaigns. I worked for one of the mayor's races and
I wasn't there on the final night. I went down the next day with
him but I wasn't there for the final night. I was at home.

MR. MORGAN: Did you have the opportunity anytime
 soon after that Republican primary
victory to discuss it with the candidate? Can you remember his
reaction?

MR. BUCK: No, I don't know that I discussed this
 more than anybody else, but I am sure I
probably saw Winfield the next day and gave he and Betty my congratu-
lations and told them how I felt. We were just on cloud nine and it
was just too good to be true. You think you are going to win, but
when you actually do, it is just too much. You are looking at the

man who is going to be Governor of the state!! You say, "Dear Friend--a super person to you," and it is quite an exciting feeling.

MR. MORGAN: After the primary, how did things change in terms of campaign and tactics of fund raising strategy or whatever? What was different in it? Once the primary was over, what were your thoughts and how did you set about it in the general election?

MR. BUCK: Of course, the tempo picks up a great deal after a primary. You have a different strategy entirely. You are trying to communicate in a different way, your finance committee is going to have to be structured a little differently. You are now going after hard money--serious money. You don't need a few hundred dollars a day; you need a couple of thousand dollars a day or whatever it is, you know. You had different strategies across the state. Harry Wellford was in charge of the campaign. They had to change committees and personalities who were working. You had to bring in people who were in the primaries that were running against Winfield in the primary. His committees were filtered in to work. So all this had to work. Where a man was the strongest you would try to put him in a job. Locally, we stayed pretty much as we were, but we increased our efforts, let's say it that way. We had a lot more call-in money on our finances. We didn't have to solicit but now people would come on. They'd say very frankly, "After the primary, I' ll be with you." After the primary they were !

If they were backing a candidate Democrat or Republican, still a lot of them came with us.

MR. MORGAN: Financing was a little easier.

MR. BUCK: Very much so. Anytime you have a man who has a good chance of winning it is different. Of course, it was a good choice for a lot of people when Winfield won in the primary. They knew he had an excellent chance. They didn't want whoever was running against him, whoever it was. Democrats and Republicans came to us openly and worked for Winfield. So it made it a little easier, but it was no easy task necessarily at all. It was a hard fight.

MR. MORGAN: Describe that a little bit more. What were some of the difficulties?

MR. BUCK: Everybody wanted Winfield to speak to their group. If it was a ladies' group at a church or a synagogue or a girl scout group or whatever it was, but everybody wanted him immediately. Everyone who felt like they could go in and say, "Winfield, I want you to go to my church group." Well, he tried, but you can't do it that way. Harry Wellford had to have his schedule planned as carefully as possible because anytime you work with a candidate as a lot of us have everyday for a long period of time, you realize what a grind it is for 18 to 20 hours a day. So that was the point that they were in demand to very much and you had to find where you could get the most mileage from a meeting.

When the Senator or the President came in town, they would try

to give them the best exposure. The same thing applies to Winfield.

MR. MORGAN: Do you remember any incidents where people were ruffled?

MR. BUCK: No, I just know that people wanted him and you would have to almost be rude but you didn't want to come to a Sunday School class of 10 or 15 or 20 people. You might go to that in the primary, but you can't do that after the primary. You've got to get with groups that are larger and yet go to people that have the ability to produce votes and money and all that. You have to pick and choose the best way to use his time day and night. Of course, it is a day and night thing. I know I worked for a man who ran for mayor here almost 7 days a week for about 4 or 5 months--Henry Loeb and it was a tremendous thing. It was such a grueling thing. He's a unbelievable campaigner. Winfield is a similar person. He can glad hand and shake your hand and smile at you right on up to midnight if you want to. You'd have to make him go home he was such a campaigner.

MR. MORGAN: He held up under that grind?

MR. BUCK: He did. Yes, I can't remember when he--
I remember--I can't remember if it was the primary or after the primary or what--he was real hoarse. He was so excited and you can't shake hands and shout over a large crowd and meet a bunch of people and be yelling and talking without getting hoarse. I think his voice just gave out on him and he was just waving without talking. He and Betty were just a team who

campaigned so beautifully. Even their children--they have a lovely family. It worked out real well.

Even after they were elected, I know I had the pleasure of being up there in Nashville once or twice with him and he never changed. He was always Winfield Dunn. We had one of his daughters and my oldest daughter were friends and she had a chance to go up and spend the week-end at the mansion with the Dunn daughter (the oldest) and had just a super time. She said they were just plain people. Toward the end of Winfield's office at the end of '74 I guess, we had a state executive meeting and several of us who were up there from Memphis saw him and he said, "Come on out to the house and have lunch." I thought it was a gracious gesture on his part. I said, "No, go ahead with your work." He really wanted us to come to talk with someone from Memphis apparently. So several of us went out there and had lunch with him. It was just like down home folks. Just a wonderful experience of being with a friend--not the governor, you know at all. He never changed, he had that ability to be just plain old Winfield.

MR. MORGAN: Within the county locally, how were those other Republicans who had supported other candidates who had been eliminated. How were they approached and brought into the campaign? Were you close enough to know that? Describe some of that.

MR. BUCK: It was just an unhappy situation. Some of these folks wanted to run their own

campaign and didn't want to support Winfield at the time. I guess you might say we let them run their own campaign from then on. Some of them may have gotten defeated because of that in future years. You have to work within the party structure as much as possible. But when you show a negative side constantly, it is difficult. That was not part of the way Winfield did things and most of the party didn't work this way. So the several folks that had this posture I think haven't helped the party or themselves at all.

MR. MORGAN: In the general election what was the relationship between the Brock and the Dunn campaign in Shelby County?

MR. BUCK: Well, I wasn't that aware of the fact that it was strained at some point.

Several personalities get their nose out of joint, you know. Somebody got their money and they thought it should be Brock's money and Winfield would get more money from this guy than Brock did or something. These persons would get involved between themselves. Dunn and Brock were close and they didn't have any conflicts ever. They didn't even know these petty things were happening. There was nothing of any great amount, but you had a lot of these little petty things come up. Always when two candidates are running, we have had it on all races in the past. We had it when two guys are running for office. We had it between Baker and Kuykendall people. You always have this pettiness, but the candidates are not involved.

MR. MORGAN: How do you handle something like that?

MR. BUCK: You just hope it goes away. You are going to get these people that are gripping and if it gets to be bad enough, you just get the guy in charge of the campaign to sit on the person and just say, "Stop it." They badmouth and talk about us and say bad things about the other candidate which is not right. If it is an individual working for that candidate that she is mad at, but those things happen all the time.

MR. MORGAN: What about the non-Republican in Shelby County? Were they brought into the regular Dunn organization?

MR. BUCK: Very much so. After the primary especially, we had I guess--I can't give you any figures--but I bet we had as many "Democrats" working for us as we had card carrying Republicans. Your independent vote is always the unknown but it is quite evident in any campaign. They were involved. You have to have this. Like I say, as to the change that occurred after Winfield's victory in the primary, you had to pull these people into that had the strength. A lot of these people could do a great job for you with their people. You couldn't solicit their people but they could. So if you had this man on a finance committee or this man on a precinct organization or this woman in a particular area they could communicate with their group much better than you.

MR. MORGAN: Can you recall any significant instances?

MR. BUCK: No, I can't name any personalities. I just know that we had encouragement

from people who wanted to work and volunteered. So when we would know that, we would notify the precinct organizer and the finance chairman and we'd get this person to the finance meeting. They would meet with us and we were glad to have them and they would go out calling on their 25 or 50 big people that had helped them in their other primary that they lost.

MR. MORGAN: Did you see or experience any of this type thing in trying to raise money from non-Republicans who were willing to contribute?

MR. BUCK: Oh yes, that is one of the few things that I have done over a period of years is raise money for the cause of the Republicans primarily. These people who were not Republicans gave as well as Republicans. You have to sell a bill of goods to them. They are interested in good government--that's all it is. They are not buying any patronages like some of these people are doing which we have reservations about. They are not looking for favors. Ninety-five percent of these people just wanted to help. If you have certain professions that have to give money because they get business from the state, but we had some of those folks who were friends of mine that gave me money for Winfield Dunn that didn't get a penny of patronage. We couldn't give patronage. We didn't have control of it.

MR. MORGAN: Overall this was not nearly the problem in the general campaign that it was in the primary--the financing?

MR. BUCK: That's right. Anytime you had 8 or 9 people running in the two camps for Governor or for Senator. Now you only have three or four people--two Republicans and two Democrats--a Governor's and a Senator's race and you only have four people to worry about now, but before you had 8 or 9 you were trying to get money for. So it was much easier to get money.

MR. MORGAN: After the primary victory was the state organization for Winfield Dunn changed somewhat? Do you recall what the relationship was or if there was any change between the state and local organizations?

MR. BUCK: Again, I was not conversant with all the personalities statewide working for Winfield. I guess I have a file on who ran a state finance committee. I don't know. Maybe it was S.L. Kopald, as finance chairman but I don't recall that. The pointed change in the structure of these committees was bringing in independents and Democrats who wanted to work with us. A person who was real strong in a certain area you have got to put him in a good job like this no matter what his party affiliation for he was working for your candidate. We did experience this.

MR. MORGAN: Do you recall any difficulty between state and local organizations such as scheduling the new candidate?

MR. BUCK: No, I'm sure it occurred because you

always have some conflicts, but I can't recall anything like this of any serious nature at all. We had I think pretty good cooperation throughout the state. It had to be a super super campaign organization-wise because you were going against a strong automatic Democratic vote and something you have to break. For the first time, we had a lot of these people who were willing to give a Republican a chance. Not a Republican--they weren't voting for a Republican, but they may have been voting against whoever was running as a Democrat, but they liked the guy's image, liked whoever he was or the way he talked. They weren't voting for a Republican necessarily. But it was a different atmosphere in the state entirely.

MR. MORGAN: As one who had worked with the Republican Party in Memphis for quite a few years, what was the long term impact and effect of the success of Winfield Dunn's campaign for governor on Republican politics in Memphis and Shelby County?

MR. BUCK: Well it gave us a new image, a new feeling of not just superiority but we had arrived. We had been at it for awhile and felt like we were doing something right and now it was proven that we were. People in the state majority felt like we were right. I think the governor's race was significant because it was a vehicle to bring to the attention of people that they could run as a Republican for governor. This hadn't happened. We've had thrust in this area, but not a

strong one in the past. We had several people run in the past who were not super candidates perhaps as far as getting their message across. Winfield had done this and after he was elected, it changed a lot of things.

Now no patronage was involved, no big change in committees across the state as such, people who were Winfield's people shall we say, may have emerged as leaders in the party throughout the state and on different committees (which is only natural) but they were oftentimes the leaders anyway. As I mentioned like Harry Wellford who was already the leader of the party here for a lot of people. Statewide he was one of the three or four names that was a Republican leader in the state. Some committees changed but it was a great feeling because you are proud of the fact that you did have some honest success that was not just honest but could do the job that you were familiar with and you could be proud of.

MR. MORGAN: After that campaign was over and Winfield Dunn became the Governor, how much contact did you have with him?

MR. BUCK: Very little. I was elected to the State Executive Committee that year and we would go to a meeting in Nashville of the State Executive Committee in Nashville for three or four times a year. We met in Nashville mostly and in Knoxville and we met in Memphis once or twice. I think after Winfield was elected the first time we met in Memphis and asked all the candidates to come. But we would see him there at the

meeting. He would speak with us a little while. He came to every meeting. In fact, if Brock and Baker were in town in Nashville he would try to come by and say, "hello" to the state executive committee because we did have the day to day running of the party. I didn't spend a whole lot of time with the Governor as such.

MR. MORGAN: In that day to day running of the party, what was the day to day running of the party? What did that entail?

MR. BUCK: You still had areas of the state that had their little factions within the party that fought between themselves and among themselves when there were more than two. And it was difficult. West Tennessee Republicans and Middle or East Tennessee Republicans are a different breed of cats in lots of ways. Some of these people up there have been on the patronage train like the Democrats for years. They have their guy in charge of the rolls, the fellow in charge of the school board--all these people are positions that the Republicans control up there in these counties. Well, you had some real serious infighting among groups in certain areas of the state not just in that part but in West Tennessee too.

The State Executive Committee had to meet at special meetings to thrash this out and find who are really the leaders up there. They would have elections and then they would have two elections and then they'd have three elections and they would have two different people who said they were chairman. We had real serious problems in





unforgiveable because these folks--a lot of them--just lived through their political connections and they made money out of the party up there. Patronage is a way of life that we don't have that in West Tennessee. We don't understand it. Republican Party doesn't have any patronage thing as such. So it is a strange thing for us. So we were introduced to this problem at the state level at the State Executive Committee meeting and it was real strange because we didn't know what they were talking about. But we did have a problem in this vote and it was to end and it was anti-Winfield Dunn perhaps because he and Lamar Alexander were close.

MR. MORGAN: Is there still some anti or some problems that were caused by some of those measures in the Dunn Administration that still exist?

MR. BUCK: No, not near as much. I think that is behind them. Those folks who went on and voted for the Democratic candidate may have gotten what they wanted or they may have had some second thoughts. A lot of them who voted against the Republicans through an anti-Republican year because of Watergate and a few other things I think this is behind. A lot of them have hurt themselves. They have put people in office that they have reservations about now. They wanted to slap our wrists and they have, but they have also slapped themselves in the fact I think in some of the people they put in office. But I think there is a lot more and better communication between East and West Tennessee right now. We don't have any problems. Another election year is

coming up and we'll see.

It'll surface a little bit maybe in Brock's campaign coming up this year. The presidential race--you'll have the President's people working and you'll have Brock's people working. They won't work together in the primary necessarily. They'll come together later.

MR. MORGAN: Are there things that I haven't touched on that you feel are significant that you would like to add about the campaign or about Winfield Dunn himself and his administration?

MR. BUCK: Well, I think the only thing is when I think of Winfield we overlook some obviously good people for office sometimes when we are looking for a professional. With all fairness to the legal profession, they aren't automatically qualified to be office holders. You know half of our politicians have been lawyers say. I'm not putting them down. They are excellent politicians oftentimes. But we are overlooking a lot of good businessmen perhaps. Some of our more successful ones and I think Winfield was one of them that come from the private sector other than just being lawyers. This is a thing that has been proven I believe. He's done an excellent job and several of our people on the City Council are not lawyers and have done a good job--not all but several have.



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